

would take over 72 years of perseverance for this campaign to succeed and for women to gain the right to vote, with the ratification of the 19th amendment.

Today, almost 85 years later, a higher percentage of women vote as compared to men. However, we still have about 32 percent of women in the United States who are not even registered to vote. Can you believe that? Among that group of women between 18 and 24 years of age, 45 percent are not even registered to vote.

We need to do more to energize and engage these young women in the political process. Women must have a voice in all national debates that affect them, especially on important issues like reproductive health, equal rights, and Social Security.

As an example, in the debate over privatizing Social Security, 58 percent of seniors receiving Social Security are women. Since women have a longer average life span than men, privatizing Social Security would harm them. Let us take up the banner, like the suffragettes did, and let us work hard for women's rights.

ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

(Ms. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark an important anniversary in our Nation's history. Eighty-five years ago, on August 18, 1920, the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified, extending the right to vote to American women.

The road to the 19th amendment was long and difficult, paved with hard work and struggle. The birth of the women's suffrage movement can be traced to the Women's Rights Commission in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848, which laid out the principles that would guide the women's movement.

More than seven decades later, those principles were at last codified into our Constitution, moving our Nation closer to meeting the promise of its founding.

Today, we have more women than ever serving in elected and appointed positions in our local, State, and national governments. Not only in this Chamber, but also in the United States Senate, in the President's Cabinet, and in a wide range of Governors' offices, as well as other positions. This represents a vast change from where we stood 85 years ago, and our Nation is stronger for it.

As we watch the spread of freedom across the globe, and as more and more women take on the rights and responsibilities of full political citizenship, let us pay tribute to those women who blazed the trail for those of us who have followed.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGISTS MOVEMENT

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 157th anniversary of the first women's suffragists movement.

Western New York is often said to be the cradle of the women's rights movement, and I am privileged to represent the area where one prominent suffragette, Susan B. Anthony, of Rochester, fought so hard for the rights that women today enjoy.

Susan B. Anthony formed the Equal Rights Association, refuted ideas that women were inferior to men, and fought for a woman's right to vote. She also campaigned for the rights of women to own property, to keep their own earnings, and have custody of their children.

In 1900, she persuaded the University of Rochester to admit their first women students. Through persistent dedication, Susan B. Anthony, and other remarkable leaders, women were finally granted the right to vote in 1920. Since then, we have made progress, but still have a long way to go. We face the gender gap. And whether it is equal pay, health care, Social Security, or family leave, this Congress has refused to address issues critical to hard-working American women.

The suffragist movement had to overcome the rhetoric and the empty promises of Members of this House 85 years ago. Commitment to concrete policies, not grandiose words, honors the battle they fought so hard and won.

85TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in recognition of the upcoming 85th anniversary of the women's right to vote.

During the first women's rights convention that took place in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton said, "We are assembled to protest against a form of government existing without the consent of the governed to declare our right to be free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's words marked the beginning of what we now know as the Women's Suffragist Movement. Seventy-two long and hard fought years after that speech, the 19th amendment was written into our country's Constitution. August 26, 2005, marks the 85th anniversary of that right.

In February of 1920, in my home State of West Virginia, the legislature

met in special session and was lobbied heavily by the State's suffragettes. On March 10, 1920, the House passed the amendment by a 15 to 14 vote. The State senate made West Virginia the 35th of the 36 States needed to ratify the amendment.

Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting that I stand here to honor and remember those women and men who petitioned, picketed, and demonstrated, even some in spite of being jailed and disgraced, for the sake of women's rights to be equal in the eyes of our government. Had it not been for the bravery and conviction of many important women that preceded us, I would not be standing here today.

Women's voices are heard loud and clear at the ballot box, and we will never forget the value of our vote.

157TH ANNIVERSARY OF HISTORIC SENECA FALLS CONVENTION

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I also speak today in tribute to the 157th anniversary of the historic Seneca Falls convention, which paved the way for women's equality in the political world. Without the principles set forward by those courageous women and men at that convention, neither I nor the other 68 Members of the House currently here would ever have dreamed of being where we are today.

American women everywhere would never have dreamed of being able to contribute what they have over the last century and a half. They have excelled as leaders of political movements and pioneers of important policies.

The women at Seneca Falls set forth an agenda that would guide the women's rights movement for centuries. Their efforts paved the way for the ratification of the 19th amendment, without which women could not cast votes on issues that directly affect them.

Despite strong opposition, they knew then that extending equal rights to women would lead to a more successful society. And 157 years later, we know they were right, and we continue their dream of a United States with full and active participation of all women in politics.

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO VOTE

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to honor the 157th anniversary of the women's suffragette movement here in the United States. On this date in 1848, a historic meeting of women leaders took place in Seneca Falls, New York.